

based on the environmental security threats we see from global warming. Climate change now stands as one of the greatest moral challenges of our time. It is an issue we are obligated to confront.

The desperation and disaster brought by Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita, and a series of prolonged droughts, floods, and fire storms over the past several years have driven climate change to the center of American consciousness. We cannot afford to leave our children a legacy of an environmental disaster. We need to begin to work on that problem now, and this legislation begins to do that with respect to carbon sequestration.

This is not the beginning of our efforts here. In 2005, this Chamber, with most of the Members who are still here today, worked in a bipartisan fashion to pass the 2005 Energy Policy Act. The bill before us today is a significant step forward toward tackling the national security, economic security, and environmental security implications of our oil addiction. The 2005 Energy Policy Act was a first step in moving us in that direction.

We approached the 2005 Energy Policy Act much as we have this proposal today. It was a work Senators DOMENICI and BINGAMAN did—Senator DOMENICI was chairman and Senator BINGAMAN as ranking member, and now their roles are reversed. They said we have an energy problem and we can craft a better energy policy, and that received nearly 80 votes in the Senate. It is that same bipartisan approach that they have taken to this legislation. Other committees also contributed to the legislation before us today and have also taken that kind of approach. That is why, at the end of the day, we will succeed in moving forward with energy legislation in the Senate.

The bill in the 109th Congress, the 2005 Energy Policy Act, was perhaps the most important energy legislation passed in 20 or 30 years in this country. During that time, I traveled to all 64 counties in Colorado and spoke to the people of my State about that bill. By and large, they appreciated the balanced approach we took to the 2005 act. The bill kick started a renewable energy economy, made big investments in technologies, took a cut at consumption with smart efficiency measures, and it made sensible additions to our domestic oil and gas supply.

There remains much to be done, and that is why we are here today. We should not forget our bipartisan work of 2 years ago, which planted the seeds for our new energy economy; and today, in the week ahead, and in the following week, we will have an opportunity to build on the success of 2 years ago.

The new energy economy is in fact taking root. I don't think you will find a better example of how quickly Americans can change their approach to energy than in my State of Colorado. We have sparked a renewable energy revo-

lution in Colorado in just 2 years, and the benefits have already touched every corner of my State. Our farmers and ranchers are leading the charge. In Weld County, Logan County, and Yuma County, which are remote and far away from Denver, we are seeing biofuel plants spring to life, creating new markets and new opportunities for our rural communities. So the "forgotten America," in fact, is having new opportunities created for them because of the fact that we are embracing the clean energy revolution. Today, we have three ethanol plants that are already in production, where there were none 2 years ago. We have several others that are under construction and are being planned.

But it is not just biofuels. In the San Luis Valley, where my family has lived, ranched, and farmed for five generations, Xcel Energy just broke ground on the largest solar plant in North America. More and more wind turbines are turning on the plains of southeastern Colorado, powering front range homes, while providing incomes for the ranchers who own the land. Indeed, the current program with respect to the construction of wind energy farms in Colorado will mean that very soon we will be producing the same amount of electricity that is produced from three coal-fired powerplants in Colorado. That is enormous progress in a very short time.

How did we spark that renewable energy revolution in Colorado? The Energy Policy Act of 2005 helped, but it is not the only force of change. The National Renewable Energy Lab in Golden is the crown jewel of our labs, and it is a hub for innovation for our clean energy future. The President of the United States has visited NREL. Many colleagues in this Chamber have visited NREL. We do all we can here to support the work that the researchers are doing there today. We have created the Colorado Renewable Energy Collaboratory, which binds the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden with the Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University, and the University of Colorado. The collaboratory is an engine for ideas, technologies, and talent, and making sure those technologies are being deployed out into the private sector.

I have held a renewable energy summit in Colorado in each of the last 2 years. We have tried to connect the business community and those people with the ideas to make sure that deployment occurs. These summits have been a huge success and were attended by the business community, environmental interests, farmers, and ranchers. This last year, we had over a thousand people who attended that summit, which was sponsored by the Governor of Colorado, Governor Ritter, as well as mayors and other leaders throughout the State.

In Colorado last year, 2007, we actually moved forward in enhancing our renewable energy standard, our renew-

able portfolio standard for our State. The renewable energy revolution underway in Colorado makes me all the more excited about the bill we are considering today. Its provisions are sensible and, by and large, they are bipartisan and should be noncontroversial.

The bill includes 3 key components. First, it dramatically increases production and the use of biofuels. The bill will quintuple the existing renewable fuels standard to 36 billion gallons by 2022, 21 billion of which must be advanced biofuels such as cellulosic ethanol. That is more than enough to offset imports from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Libya combined. I will say that again. The 21 billion gallons of advanced biofuels, combined with what we produce from corn ethanol, will get us to 36 billion gallons. That amount of production from alternative biofuels is enough to offset our imports from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Libya combined. I make that point to underscore the importance of the biofuels and alternative fuels title in this legislation.

Second, H.R. 6 also helps us reduce our dependence by making better use of what we have. The transportation sector accounts for a full two-thirds of our oil consumption. It offers the cheapest and best opportunities for saving fuel. The bill helps automakers retool their vehicles by providing items such as loan guarantees for hybrids and advanced diesels. The bill will also make a reasonable increase in CAFE standards. The bill increases and incentivizes the engineering capabilities of our automakers.

Finally, the bill before us also begins to address the environmental consequences of our energy policy. The debate about how to tackle the threat of global warming will have few easy answers. It will be a difficult challenge for us when we get to specifically addressing the issue of global warming later in this Congress. But one thing we can do today is to determine how we can store the carbon we are currently putting into the atmosphere. Carbon sequestration technology is neither new nor complicated. It has been around in the oil fields in America for 50 years. We need to take that technology and refine our techniques for storing it and determine where we can store the carbon that is currently being emitted from powerplants and other sources around our country. This bill will help start us in that direction.

Mr. President, how much time do I have left?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Six minutes.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I want to say I am very proud of this bill. I know a lot of work has gone into this bill. It is an impressive and thoughtful next step toward reducing our dependence upon foreign oil. In the coming days, I hope we can find ways to strengthen this legislation in some specific ways.

I want to speak very briefly about four amendments that several of my